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ABSTRACT

A content analysis of a 1976 series of primary reading textbooks was conducted to analyze salient factors affecting female role socialization. Examined in its entirety, the series was designed for grades one through six and contained 573 entries and 4,831 illustrations. In each of the textbooks, regardless of grade level, twice as many males as females were portrayed in main character roles and in pictures. Occupational stereotyping pervaded the textbook series, with men portrayed in four times as many paying occupations as females. The female characters had personality characteristics (dependency, passivity, emotionalism, incompetence) similar to those found in other studies. Overall, the three hypotheses that were tested were proved: (1) greater numbers of males than females were portrayed; (2) societal expectations for males and females were reflected in the occupations portrayed; and (3) the personality traits of women in textbooks were positively associated with societal definitions of those traits. (RL)

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SEX STEREOTYPING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN ELEMENTARY TEXTBOOKS AND IT'S IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE WORK FORCE PARTICIPATION

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In the last half of this decade there has been a noticeable increase in literature directed toward explanations of sex-role differentiation. At least three major theories may be identified. The first encompasses various descriptive accounts, usually within a historical context, which depict differences in sex-roles as evolving from a division of labor. A second theoretical approach examines inherent biological propensities as determinants of differentiation, while the third research area subsumes role socialization as the elicitation of conformity to societal norms. Although specific objectives within each of these domains have differed, studies have been similar in the outcome variables of role differentiation.

Anthropological studies done by Robert Murdock (1947) and Margaret Mead (1935;1949) support the hypothesis that economic role differentiation along sex lines is practically universal. Sex-roles prescribe behavior regardless of marital status and age, but they are most centrally concerned with the gender based breadwinner versus homemaker specialization. Mead concluded in finding a division of labor allocated along sex lines, that women because of their indisputable differences in reproductive functions, had been assigned the role of home-tenders. Mead also finds evidence that it is necessary for men to surpass women in all cultures, and suggests a relationship between the males' need to achieve and cultures' frequently phrasing achievements as something that women do not or cannot do, rather than directly as something men do well. An example in our culture is brick laying, cattle raising and cement mixing which are defined as something that women do not do; high achievement, independence, contact sports and stressful occupations as something women cannot do. This prescribed division of labor has been further justified by beliefs about innate sex differences and children's needs which may, in turn, justify differential opportunities and rights of the sexes outside of the home (Blake, 1972). As the theory of cognitive

dissonance suggests, the very fact that more women are now working even when their children are young (Oppenheimer, 1973) may mean it has become increasingly difficult for women to believe that differentiation based on economic roles is either ineluctable, or harmful for children's well being.

The bio-genetic explanation suggests cultural conditioning of sex-roles as a reflection of that which is innate (Bardwick, 1971; Lynn, 1972; Freud, 1938). While recognizing biology is involved to some extent in behavior, if sex-roles are not fixed adaptations by society to pre-determined biological and genetic dictates, a strong hypothesis can be derived regarding socialization as a causal variable of contemporary female roles.

Psychologists have found impressive differences in behavior patterns between sexes in childhood, at adolescence and in early adulthood. Judith Bardwick (1971: 36) in challenging "the long standing emphasis on the environment as resulting in a psychosomatic blindness toward body contributions" hypothesized that low levels of estrogen, progesterone and testosterone occurring naturally post-menstrually account for the female expressing behaviors of helplessness, anxiety and yearning for love, while high levels of these hormones (occurring naturally pre-menstrually) accounted for hostile behavior as measured by verbal responses to hypothetical situations. Endocrine-related effects in adult women lend support to the idea that there are differences between sexes that have, as one origin, variation in the endocrine systems and possibly in the central nervous system. The existence of these differences implies that there are modal differences in response potentials between the sexes. Further, there may be other variants of which we are not yet aware. To the extent that there are physical contributions to the psychological development of human beings, there is likely to be a limit upon changes in the characteristic distribution of traits that can be attributed to socialization practices. Although Bardwick's results are impressive, showing some relationship between higher levels of hostility as testosterone increases in females, it should be remembered that differences in male and

female sex hormone production do not become pronounced until puberty. By this time, the socialization experiences that females have undergone obscures the singular function of hormones in the determination of most types of behavior. Rather, the data suggests that indeed females may have similar tendencies toward aggressive behavior patterns as males; yet these are encouraged only for the latter in our culture. The fact that historically the overwhelming majority of cultures have socialized their children in such a way that differences between the sexes are maximized suggests that cultures may be reinforcing behavior which is considered to be characteristic of the sexes based on economic, societal and biological expectation norms. Since women do bear children, often this reproductive function has become synonymous with passive, dependent and nurturing personality traits which are allowed and expected to develop in girls and dis-allowed in boys. If the culture portrays division of labor as a hierarchy where males perform vital tasks while women mature with the understanding that she may per chance work, but her contribution will be merely supplemental; many female dominated sex-typed jobs remain so, not the least in part because these jobs reinforce female behavior expectations of assumed personality traits. If a woman considers her economic contribution supplementary (even when it is necessary to maintain a decent standard of living for her family) she will be more willing than men to accept low pay and poor working conditions regardless of the fact that many of these occupations combine a fairly high level of training and education with very low pay, such as nursing and teaching (McNally in Goldberg, 1970) while at the same time accept the social definition that she is not motivated to seek economic rewards.

Margaret Mead (1935) concludes that when those temperamental attributes which we have traditionally regarded as feminine, such as passivity, responsiveness and willingness to nurture children can easily be set up as the masculine pattern in one tribe and dis-allowed in another for the majority of both men and women, then we no longer have any basis for regarding such aspects of behavior as merely biologically sex-linked, rather sex-role differentiation is effected by socialization through

culturally defined role expectations.

Orville Brim, Jr. (1958:312) defined the masculine role as "tenacious, aggressive, ambitious, responsible, original and self confident." Female definitions of attributes are indicated as "obedient, cheerful, friendly, upset by defeat, affectionateness and teasing." Parsons and Bales (1954) mediated this terminology by defining males as 'instrumental' females as 'expressive'. Erikson (1968) similarly defined masculine as 'intrusive', feminine as 'receptive' including the idea that male children actively seek what they want in life; female children must adopt a more passive means of satisfying their needs. These cultural definitions of sex-role expectations are important determinants of gender related behavior patterns since role making can be thought of as a process whereby behavioral experimentation on the part of the individual leads to established patterns of interaction (Aldous, 1974). The motivation toward experimentation and the establishment of these patterns is based upon the interaction of the actor's self-concept, his/her behavior relevant to this concept, and the perceived reaction of significant others to the behavior (Arnott, 1972). One of the strongest messages of the role learning process is that of sex-role differences with educational experiences during formative years being the primary socializing influence for children outside of the home.

Within the educational institution, textbooks are a salient tool for the expression of a society's values, norms and sanctions, as well as the role models it rewards (Howe, 1971). The readers convey official approval, being presented within a context of authority, the school classroom. Further, roles are presented to children who have not yet attained a critical perspective on themselves (Rabbin, 1950; Brown, 1956), thus textbooks have the potential to mold and manipulate the roles that one is expected to play and the actual roles one wants to enact. With few exceptions, every elementary school child is exposed to a reading textbook every day. Even if a child looks only at the illustrations or is unable to read, s/he will experience in the classroom, group discussions of the stories, plays and other material in the texts. Thus, by

passive reception or active involvement, whatever overt and covert messages the book contains penetrate pupil's minds early and often. If a society is asking little and expecting less from any of its members; if it is reserving the right to refuse service to anyone of its choice, the textbooks will mirror the discriminations (Pogebrin, 1971). Subsequently, the degree to which boys and girls are treated differently is a good indicator of current social expectations. Research substantiates that messages from primary texts aimed to small girls has been very different from those directed at small boys (Sarrio, Jacklin, Tittle, 1973; Graebner, 1973; Howe, 1973). Edward Hall (1959) found that children were assimilating the content and values of their books as they learned to read, without giving it any conscious thought. Watson (1966) and Hartley (1959) concluded that by the age of eight, ninety-nine percent agreement is found among children of both sexes on the subject of which sex does which job, what kind of a person a girl or boy should be and what the role limitations and expectations are.

Through our past textbooks we have taught that males were and should be aggressive independent, nonemotional, logical, direct, adventurous, physically strong and more important; that females were and should be responsive, passive, tactful, gentle, weak and in need of security (Michigan Commission Report, 1972). While few fit the stereotypes, they are accepted as the conscious and unconscious models for appropriate sex-role behavior and even when individuals rebel, they measure themselves against them (Arnott, 1972). If textbooks sanction and perpetuate sexist stereotypes, every American child is being affected and their self-concepts influenced. Textbooks affect the thinking, feeling and doing of our female children. The role models can become arbitrary stereotypes and thus serve to restrict rather than represent roles for female children since any institution having this extensive exposure should have a tremendous sociological impact.

This research project will be an attempt to discover if indeed, outmoded, unrealistic and repressive stereotypes are a major influence in 1976 textbook content.

The following areas of potential stereotyping will be examined: (1) socialization of females into sex-typed personality and behavior roles, (2) a lack of alternatives and status-conferring mechanisms for women and girls besides that of wife-nurturer, (3) discrimination against women and sex typing of occupations and (4) attitudes regarding the importance attached to being female in our culture.

In order to analyze salient factors within the elementary educational curriculum affecting female role socialization, a content analysis of primary grade textbooks was undertaken. Coding manifest material in communication involves noting concrete terms, such as particular words or pictures. This method has the advantage of ease and reliability in coding, as well as allowing the reader of the research report to know precisely how a variable was measured. Alternatively, the researcher may code latent content of communications. An entire book or a sample of paragraphs is examined to make an overall assessment of the underlying meaning of the communication. Clearly this advantage comes at a cost of reliability and specificity while increasing validity. In this research endeavor, the dilemma was solved whenever possible by employment of both manifest and latent analysis for each variable under study. Thus, a given unit of observation should receive similar characterization if coding manifest content has validity and latent content has reliability. Although agreement produced by the two methods is still imperfect, a closer approximation was hoped to have been achieved.

A purposive sampling procedure meeting three criteria was used for the initial selection of textbooks. The sample had to be (1) representative of present cultural patterns to enable a distinction between current stereotypic role portrayal and past social expectations for women, (2) widely circulated to justify the inference of findings from the sample to a large population group and (3) guarded against personal bias due to the researcher's familiarity with recent studies (1971, 1972, 1973) of primary readers depicting women and girls in highly stereotypic roles. The initial sampling frame consisted of 140 primary readers published by 15 companies. From this sampling frame, 3 publishers had made significant revisions since 1972; two were

considered among the top three publishers of primary textbooks (Time Magazine, 1973). The final decision to use the particular nine-book series of readers for this study was based on (1) evidence the publishers had made partial revisions in 1973 and 1974, (2) full revisions in 1975, (3) adequate circulation size, and (4) Federal pressure placed upon the publisher under Title IX of the Education Amendments Act to remove sex-discriminatory entries from their readers. The series in its entirety for grades 1 through 6 comprised 9 general subject readers containing 573 entries for possible analysis and represented over 90 authors. Entries included stories, skill lessons, poems, plays and biographies. The series contained 2 first, second and third grade texts; 1 fourth, fifth and sixth grade text. Although any of the conventional sampling techniques appropriate for use in the social sciences may be employed in content analysi probability sampling was not used for this study. Rather, every textbook and every entry was examined.

The textbooks and entries (poems, stories, skill lessons and biographies) were the units of analysis, while the individual actors, pictures, words, phrases, sentences and contexts relevant to conceptualization and operationalization of theoretical concerns were further units of analysis. Due to an absence of the proper unit of analysis for comparison purposes in particular entries or textbooks, tables may show varying sample sizes. This was a concern in two areas. The personality traits of women and girls were made in comparison to those portrayed by men and boys. In this application the "relationship between content and a standard which is supposed to be met, serves as the basis for the conclusion" (Berelson, 1952:190). If there were no males in the entry under study, a comparative measure was not possible. Second, the comparison had to be made in between peer groups; adult behavior of females to adult behavior of males; children of approximate ages of one sex to children of approximate ages of the other sex. Those entries which did not meet this criteria could not be used. For example, many stories portrayed a housewife-mother and several children. The mother's behavior could not be assessed

relative to the conduct of the male children.

When pictures were the unit of analysis for counting purposes, all those that were clearly distinguishable as male or female were used. In the case of animals, the content of the story was read to establish gender if identification was not possible by clothing. In ascertaining story orientation, units of analysis included pictures and content. When ambiguity existed, the number of pronouns and proper names were numerically counted, along with clearly distinguishable pictures. Both pictures and content were used as units of analysis to determine occupational roles. Where occupations were not distinguishable by costume, content was searched for direct reference to particular roles.

On the basis of theory and current literature, the following hypotheses were tested in order to examine factors within primary textbooks affecting female role socialization. The general thesis proposed by this paper is that values and norms of the general social order regarding the desirability of being male will be reflected in textbook content.

1) Independent of thematic content and grade level, there will be a greater number of males than females portrayed.

2) Societal expectations for males and females will be reflected by the occupations portrayed in textbooks.

3) The personality traits of women in textbooks will be positively associated with societal definitions of these traits; further the portrayals of traits will increase as complexity of material increases.

In this discussion, the independent variable, 'female sex-role' is defined as the societal expectation for women and girls with respect to their behavior, importance and occupations compared to men and boys.

The general dependent variable, personality traits, includes a precise definition of four more specific variables with an ordinally-organized question for each attribute. Since perfectly equal intervals would be extremely difficult to achieve, a scale system was devised that assumes approximately equal intervals between subdivisions. The four variables comprising 'personality traits for women' are dependency, emotionalism, passivity and incompetence.

The differences between male and female personality traits are considered to be so obvious that little or no research exists to document their veracity. Research reports, popular literature, magazines, songs and advertisements supporting the use of similar adjectives or synonyms as descriptive of the female personality are voluminous (Horner, 1973; Friedan, 1963; Safilios-Rothschild, 1972; Erikson, 1958; Broverman, 1972; Chafetz, 1974; Chester, 1971). The criteria upon which a decision was based to study the above mentioned variables were (1) the parsimonious value achieved by the combination of synonyms and (2) traditional and repeated use of these terms in the literature accompanying feminine role definitions.

Using the definition for the following personality attributes, a coder was asked to classify the textbook character accordingly. The same index was used for each personality attribute; consequently, only the first one dealing with dependency will be shown here as illustration.

The variable, 'dependency' was defined for this study as textbook characters whose achievements were determined by something or someone else; those who were subordinate to peers and younger siblings, unable to function satisfactorily without the aid of another or unnecessairly needed to rely on another for support. A score of 6 was the highest on the scale, or the most indicative of the variable under examination.

6 Females are portrayed as dependent, but much more dependent than males.

5 Females are portrayed as dependent, but only somewhat more dependent than males.

4 Females are portrayed as dependent, but as equally dependent as males.

3 Females are portrayed as independent, but somewhat less independent than males.

2 Females are portrayed as independent, and as equally independent as males.

1 Females are portrayed as independent, and as more independent than males.

The variable, 'emotionalism' was defined for this study as textbook characters who showed or expressed feelings. These included such expressions as fearfulness, helplessness, crying, empathy, tenderness, gentleness or anger.

'Passivity' was defined as mild, docile or spiritless behavior. Passive text-

book characters displayed a lack of initiative, ability or desire to be self-assertive, win, or show their talents.

The final dependent variable among personality traits, was 'incompetence'. Defined for this study, incompetence was an inability to accomplish a task; a lack of intellectual abilities, interest in academic endeavors, problem solving abilities or resourcefulness.

Other dependent variables were the delineation of occupations, the number and sex of illustrations, main characters, and entries in which there were only males or only females portrayed. The 'gender orientation' of each story was measured using the following criteria: (1) Male-oriented stories were those in which there were more items in the entry about males than about females or, (2) in which the illustrations were only of males or, (3) the pronouns exclusively male. Female-oriented entries were classified in the same way, but with reciprocal gender. Other categories comprising 'gender orientation' were 'both' when the entry had a main character from each gender and the orientation was equal, or 'neutral' in cases where gender was not ascertainable.

Validity was pretested by using a purposive sample based on the researcher's contacting women presently living in the city, married and within an age range of 30 to 40 years. This sample had been previously interviewed regarding their attitudes towards traditional or liberated roles for women. They had indicated a preference for the former. Women with traditional attitudes would be assumed to also have the traditional personality variables under examination for this analysis. A direct test of validity therefore, involved giving these women concrete illustrations from the textbooks and requesting them to indicate which particular personality variable each example portrayed.

Reliability of all the variables measured was determined with a pre-test, comparing the scores of seven individuals who read the same sample of three stories. Four coders in the pretest were women, three were men. A purposive sample of stories

was taken for the pretest, meeting three criteria: (1) Each story included all the variables under study, (2) they portrayed the variables in varying degrees so that a constant would not be obtained and (3) all the stories were to be included in the final sample for this study. T-tests were computed to determine if the differences between the means of the coders in the pretest were significant. None of the differences between the means in the pretest were statistically significant at the .05 probability level.

Findings

Female textbook characters have similar behavior patterns to all three variables under examination to those found in other studies conducted in 1973 (see Sarrio, Jacklin, Tittle, Graebner, Michigan Commission Report). Hypothesis 1 is substantiated by the data in Table 1. The percentage of males to females is higher in all three

Table 1. Percent Gender Portrayal by Content and Grade Total N = 507

Content	Illustrations Male %	Illustrations Female %	(N)	[b]Main Character Male %	Main Character Female %	(N)	[b]Story Orientation* Male %	Story Orientation* Female %	(N)
Grades									
1-2	64	36	(2026)	69	31	(36)	74	26	(72)
3-4	74	26	(1418)	72	28	(67)	84	16	(112)
5-6	72	28	(1387)	68	32	(76)	76	25	(109)
Total	70	30	(4831)	70	30	(179)	78	22	(293)

*Male-oriented stories are those in which there are more items in the entry about males than about females; or in which the illustrations are only of males or the pronouns exclusively males. Female-oriented entries were classified in the same way, but with reciprocal gender.

[b]A total of 310 entries were suitable for this analysis from the nine textbooks, since some entries were skill lessons or poems in which no identifiable main character or orientation was possible. Other categories comprising the N=310, which are not shown in this table were 'both' when the entry had a main character from each gender and the orientation was equal, or 'neutral' in cases where gender was not ascertainable, i.e., trains.

[c]Using the chi-square test of probability all sex differences for each column are significant at the P. .05 level.

categories under examination. In each of the textbooks, there are twice the number of males than females portrayed in main character roles and pictures, regardless

of grade level. The first four textbooks, comprising grades 1-2 show twice the number of male oriented stories, while in the 3 readers covering grades 3-4, there are five times as many male oriented stories as female oriented stories. In the final two texts, used for the fifth and sixth grades, there are three times as many male oriented entries.

Occupational stereotyping pervades the textbook series, strongly supporting the second hypothesis. A total of 249 different occupations were portrayed within the texts and illustrations of the 9 readers. Men held 199 different occupations, or 80% while women held 50 different occupations, or 20%. Of the 50 occupations portrayed for women, only 15 appear in more than one book. Housewife-mother, housekeeper, wife, nurse, teacher, queen and witch all appear in at least four books while housewife-mother, teacher and wife repeatedly appear in all 9 books. Occupations which were not held concurrently by men included: ecologist, factory worker, housekeeper, nurse, clay potter, stewardess, textile worker, waitress and witch. Waitress was the only occupation portrayed by a women who was also a mother. Her occupation was referred to in the text; she was portrayed as a mother in illustrations Given the additional information that men hold 158 other jobs suggests that being male is a prerequisite occupational qualification for 90 percent of all jobs.

Men and boys are heavily overrepresented in this sample. Men are portrayed in 4 times as many paying occupations than females. Females are most frequently shown as housewife-mother and occupied with cooking, cleaning or serving children and husbands. Hence, in content and illustrations, the occupations for women suggest a limitation on, rather than an expansion of occupational choices.

Although this occupational data shows a slight increase of roles for women from those found in previous studies, substantially the results are identical. The division of labor is a hierarchy, where males perform vital tasks and women perform tasks that are supplemental. By sex-typing certain jobs, especially those such as nursing and teaching society encourages a highly skilled and still inexpensive labor force and suggests discouragement to those girls who wish to be assured the

same opportunities as boys for future employment.

Table 2 offers support for Hypotheses 3: the portrayal of female personality traits is associated with the societal definitions of those traits, increasing as the complexity of material increases.

Table 2. Percent High Index Scores on Personality Characteristics by Grade Level

Personality Characteristics[a]	Grades 1-2 %	(N)	3-4 %	(N)	5-6 %	(N)	N = 64
Dependency[b]	56	(9)	56	(13)	78	(18)	
Emotionalism[b]	54	(7)	60	(12)	81	(17)	
Passivity	41	(7)	38	(8)	48	(10)	
Incompetency[b]	41	(7)	35	(8)	52	(12)	

[a]Index scores were collapsed as follows: (5-6 = High) (3-4 = Medium) (1-2 = Low). Table 2 contains the 'high' scores for each of the personality traits by combined grade levels.

[b]Using the chi-square test of significance, relationships between these personality traits and grade levels are significant at $P. < .05$.

For each trait, dependency, emotionalism, passivity and incompetency, the modal score falls in the 'high' category on the index. This held true for passivity and incompetence as well, despite the relatively lower numbers of high scale scores in these categories. Three of the four row frequencies showing the relationship between personality traits and grade levels are significant at less than the .05 level of probability, using the chi-square one sample test (see Sidney Siegel, Non-parametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, McGraw Hill, New York, 1956, pp. 42-47). Passivity scale scores for the textbooks were not as high as expected: although the passivity index scores increase with grade levels, the difference between grade categories for passivity is not significant at the .05 rejection level. A more detailed study is needed to substantiate this.

As a group, female textbook characters in this sample, had similar personality characteristics (dependency, passivity, emotionalism, incompetence) to those found in other studies. Contrary to long standing theories which claim a relationship

between all four traits (Bardwick, 1971; Lynn, 1972; Freud, 1938) no relationship was found to exist between emotionalism and passivity nor between emotionalism and dependency when a rank order correlation analysis was done on textbook characters.

Table 3. Rank Order Correlations of Personality Traits N = 64

Personality Characteristics	Dependent	Emotional	Passive	Incompetent
Dependent		.04	.44*	.36*
Emotional			-.09	.24*
Passive				.36*
Incompetent				

*Four of the 6 possible correlation coeficients for each of the personality characteristics are significant at $P < .05$.

This is quite surprising, although adds emphasis to Erikson (1968) who defines masculine as 'intrusive,' feminine as 'receptive'. Erikson theorized that female children adopt a more passive means of satisfying their needs, while males actively seek what they want in life. Dependency, passivity and incompetence indicate receptive behavior patterns. In contrast, these data question the assumptions of Parsons and Bales (1955) as well as Brim (1958) who defined the feminine role as 'expressive, obedient, upset by defeat, cheerful, friendly, teasing and affectionateness'. Although a note of caution is needed in interpreting these data since the sample size is small, unlike measuring human behavior through the use of personality profile and attitude measurement scales, a content analyst has the advantage of actually observing the actions and reactions within the realm of human behavior without obtrusive effects on the sample. If we accept that personality traits in females are interrelated, this finding suggests more detailed studies are needed for verification.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 made all discriminatroy practices illegal, denying federal funds to public schools that use sexist textbooks. Publishe began facing pressures to eliminate stereotyping. The publisher of the readers in question for this study, began a number of changes which were implemented over a

three year period. This paper attempted to examine the effects of efforts made to eliminate roles based solely on gender. Although this is not a trend study, by the comparison of these findings to those of studies discussed, a general overview of attitudes toward sex-stereotyping can be gained. Although it is obvious, comparatively speaking, that an effort has been made to create a more equitable balance of roles for females, the values of a non-discriminatory reading program have not yet been met. The methodology for this study did not permit an opportunity to quantify the extent and diversity of some sex-stereotyped patterns, however Erikson's theoretical perspectives appear thematically throughout the series.

Adult women continue to be a great disappointment in the readers. Although they are competent in domestic chores (the most frequently assigned 'high competency' score was given to women in domestic areas) they do little else. Women are continuously portrayed as happy and contented as they wave good-bye to children and husbands, cooking or waiting for others to return from their activities and occupations. The important message conveyed by these readers is not that the role of homemaker is necessairly inferior, but that the women's unique identity is rendered irrelevant. Although men are discouraged from developing certain desirable traits such as tenderness and sensitivity, as women are discouraged from being assertive, it is still the women who seem to have no real individuality.

Constant exposure to a sex discriminatory reading program can induce in all children inaccurate, restrictive and stereotypic attitudes towards human potential. The indoctrination of children by a biased reading program can be detrimental to them as individuals and to the society of which they are a part. These stereotypes are consistent with our present social reality encumbered with all the vestiges of sexism. The perpetuation of these traditional stereotypes can have a limiting effect upon the satisfaction of societal needs. We live in a country where it is no longer a biological given that most of a woman's adult life will be spent in childbearing, and one where the availability of birth control makes it possible that families choose whether and when to have children. Yet through textbooks, we continue to socialize

girls to believe their primary role is one of marriage-childbearing-housecleaning, passivity and dependence; to socialize boys to believe their status and self worth is measured by job success, competence and achievement. If we are encouraged to assume a self-definition and certain behaviors that may or may not be congruent with our natural proclivities; or express only half of our human potential, this seems a privation for everyone involved. If stereotyped ideas could be changed, men and women could have equal access to all options and make choices according to their particular talents, wishes and goals. It seems the latter is an empty gesture toward social betterment without the former, which could continue and possibly sustain the impetus toward a more egalitarian society.

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